

## March 2012 Newsletter

### CIRM March Newsletter

- CIRM Presents Transition Plan to State Capitol
- Raising Awareness for Heart Disease, Stroke, and Rare Disease
- Ellen Feigal Discusses CIRM's Huntington's Disease Research
- Grantee Sheng Ding Among 40 Under 40 Emerging Bay Area Leaders
- Creativity Awards Student Semifinalist in National Science Competition
- Upcoming Events

### CIRM Presents Transition Plan to State Capitol

In late February, CIRM presented its transition plan to California elected officials in Sacramento. The plan was mandated by SB 1064, which passed in 2010. The intention of that item in the legislation was to encourage CIRM to look toward the future and make sure the state continues to benefit from the agency's activities even after the \$3 billion authorized by proposition 71 is spent.

- Read CIRM Chair Jonathan Thomas' discussion of the plan

### Raising Awareness for Heart Disease, Stroke, and Rare Diseases

On February 1st, the American Heart Association kicked off the 2012 American Heart Month and Wear Red Day to raise awareness for heart disease and stroke with a focus on women who are less likely than men to recognize their risk. CIRM blogged about its efforts to fund stem cell treatments for heart disease and stroke. Also, in recognition of Rare Disease Awareness Day on February 29th, CIRM blogged about several grant awards that focus on development of stem cell-based treatments for rare diseases such as ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), sickle cell anemia, and epidermolysis bullosa, a lethal childhood skin disease.

- Read the blog about American Heart Month
- Read the blog about Rare Disease Awareness Day

### Ellen Feigal Discusses CIRM's Huntington's Disease Research

On February 27th, Ellen Feigal, Senior Vice President of Research and Development at CIRM, was the featured guest on HD View, an online talk radio show hosted by Melissa Biliardi, who is a caregiver and advocate for her son who has Juvenile Huntington's Disease. Feigal discussed CIRM's overall mission as well as CIRM-funded research projects focused on Huntington's Disease. She also gave advice to patient advocates on how to help promote research and stay informed about CIRM's progress.

- Read blog about Feigal's Interview
- Listen to the 1-hour Interview

### Grantee Sheng Ding Among 40 Under 40 Emerging Bay Area Leaders

The San Francisco Business Times recognized Sheng Ding of the J. David Gladstone Institutes as one of its 40 under 40 emerging Bay Area leaders for 2012. Ding has a New Faculty Award and a New Cell Lines Award from CIRM. Ding has reported several key research results in the past few years including direct transformation of skin cells to beating heart cells as well as neuronal cells.

- Read about Sheng Ding's award

## **Creativity Awards Student Semifinalist in Nation Science Competition**

Last summer, Ryan Chow of Leland High School in San Jose, California participated in the CIRM Creativity Awards pilot program, a high school internship that brought students, many from socioeconomically deprived backgrounds, into stem cell research labs. This year, Chow was recognized as a semi-finalist in both the Siemens National Science Competition and the Intel STS National Talent Search based on his summer internship project in the Stanford University lab of Irv Weissman. An expanded Creativity Awards program begins next summer. On March 21st, the CIRM board will vote on which grant applications to approve for funding.

- Read about Ryan Chow's awards and the Creativity Awards program

## **Upcoming Events**

### **ICOC Governing Board Meeting / Spotlight on Disease**

March 21: The CIRM governing board will hold its second meeting of 2012 in Sacramento. The lunch-hour Spotlight on Disease seminar will focus on recent advances toward stem cell therapies for healing osteoporosis and bone fractures. You can get location and agenda details by watching our meetings page. The agenda will be posted 10 days before the meeting. You can also sign up to receive announcements about CIRM meetings on our website.

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